

PRAIRIE FIRE

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"IT'S NOT A CO-OP STORE ANYMORE. THE STRIKERS WILL NEVER FEEL THE SAME TOWARDS THEIR WORK UNLESS A FAIR SETTLEMENT IS MADE."

--Kit Kozier

Picket Captain

CO-OP STRIKE ENTERS FIFTH WEEK

In what appeared to be a fully integrated manoeuvre, police and management drove a truck and trailer unit through the picket lines at the Sherwood Co-op Friday night, narrowly avoiding injuring picketers.

An out-of-town rented truck, pulling a large federated Co-op trailer appeared behind the Sherwood Food Mart after dark, and after being held up for a while by the picket lines, the truck was guided through by police.

As the truck appeared on the scene so did at least 8 Regina policemen, obviously tipped off.

One policeman was heard telling the truck driver to drive straight through the picketers to get his truck out of the traffic. The driver obeyed the orders.

The driver, hired for the occasion said:

"I don't know what's go-

ing on I just drive the truck."

George H. Smith, president of the Regina Labour Council, was on the picket line when the truck went through. He was thrown out of the truck's path by two policemen.

Mr. Smith told the PRAIRIE FIRE:

"The rest of the trade union movement in Regina are angry enough at the causes of the strike, that violence could erupt.

"It is only through the intervention of the RWDSU staff that violence has been averted."

Late Friday evening the police had refused to let the truck begin unloading until confirmation of correct delivery licensing procedure had been checked out.

Management's action came just when the first signs of movement toward the renewal of contract talks in the

five week strike had begun.

A representative of the provincial labour department is scheduled to meet Tuesday with representatives of management and Local 539 of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union (RWDSU).

As well, a group of Co-op members, acting under the name Committee of Concerned Co-operators, are proceeding with legal action in an attempt to force management to schedule immediately a special membership meeting that was called by a petition of 150 Co-op members. The meeting is to discuss the strike and its ramifications for the organization.

The RWDSU workers went out on strike Sept. 10 after final union concessions and an offer to accept mediation had been rejected by the Sherwood management.

Management's attempt to delete workers' benefits

that have been written into contracts over the past 23 years is the main reason behind the first strike in the co-op's history.

The management settled on a position that has yet to be changed, early in the bargaining process.

They proposed to delete sick leave benefits, group insurance, added accident compensation, to reduce paid compassionate leave, medicare and hospital benefits, change grievance procedures, eliminate pay for employees conducting negotiations, weaken seniority, promotion and lay-off provisions and to add a no-strike clause.

Management said they would keep the benefits for the workers, but would rather not have them in the agreement.

The union's position was to seek improved rather than

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6



EDITORIAL:



Have you ever been walking up to a store or driving into a parking lot when someone wearing a sandwich board tried to stop you, saying "Please don't cross our picket line; we're on strike here"?

Why do these people make such a spectacle of themselves? Why must they put the consumer on the spot?

When a worker goes on strike, he is desperate. People do not hastily or happily decide to forego weeks, and even months' of wages regular.

Walking mile upon mile over the same patch of concrete is hard work. Serving on a picket line is no vacation. Confronting strangers is awkward and embarrassing.

If the union is strong, the members on the line may be quite jovial because they know morale is important. They are pitting their physical staying power against the economic staying power of their employers.

Since the first costly struggles to win the right to strike, many anti-union and anti-strike attitudes have been absorbed by the general population.

These attitudes are often fostered by newspapers and radio and television stations which are owned and influenced by wealthy and powerful employers. Such sentiments serve to weaken the bargaining power of organized workers.

Striking workers find it increasingly difficult to reason with irate customers who grit their teeth and mutter "don't believe in unions", as they push through the doorway, or roar through picket lines into the parking lot.

Workers who trudge up and down the sidewalk hour after

hour in the hot sun and freezing rain, are there to speak to all the people who patronize their boss's business. It is the consumer who finally determines the bargaining power of the striking workers.

No business can function without workers. No society can function without the labour of its citizens.

The individual worker - the sales clerk, the bus driver, the secretary, the construction worker - each one, alone, is expendable and can be replaced with relative ease.

As a result, the individual worker usually weilds very little influence over the decisions which determine the conditions under which he works, the nature of his job, or the size of his paycheck.

It is only when workers back each other up and make their demands in an organized and co-operative manner that they can take the responsibility for these overall decisions.

A person on a picket line has decided, despite the sacrifice, that certain conditions of his job are unfair.

He has decided he owes it to himself, his fellow workers, and future workers to refuse to tolerate the situation any longer, and to obstruct the institution that supplies his income.

It was action of this sort on the part of working people that helped to bring about the abolition of child labour, the eight hour day, decent working conditions and other general social needs such as universal education, comprehensive medicare and hospitalization, old age pensions, and universal suffrage.



LETTERS, letters, letters

To the Editor:

My recently installed new starter just broke down again.

Why do things on our cars break down?

Why does your farm machinery break down?

Hundreds of thousands of Canadians spend on the average \$20 per month to operate their cars. Auto wreckers and automobile companies do a booming business selling new and used parts, charging exorbitant repair rates.

On the outskirts of every major city in Canada there are massive piles of old car and machinery parts. These parts are there because some technician is paid \$25,000 a year to design car parts that will break down after so many hours of use.

While all this planned break-down is going on, the courts are fining people for driving with burnt-out head lights and holes in their mufflers; while they should be fining the automobile companies because they are the ones who are responsible.

Planned break-downs are also placing our lives in danger as Ralph Nader and many other authors have described. They

not only want our money, but they are quite willing to take our lives as well.

About \$700 of the average price of a new car pays for wages and materials to design and build parts that will break down at pre-planned intervals, according to American economists P. Baran and P. Sweezy.

Baran and Sweezy also claim that \$500 of the cost of every new car is advertising costs.

Consequently, approximately \$1,200 of the price of every new car, a cost that is borne by the consumer, accounts for either planned breakdown or advertising. In other words, he is making an investment that will pull money out of his pocket at some future date.

The farmer is also being hit by the same process. He used to be able to buy a tractor that he could repair on his own and that was built in such a way that few repairs were needed. I know a farmer that had pre-war tractors that lasted for more than twenty years with only minor repairs.

The tractors that the farmer is forced to buy today are covered with all kinds of power and hydraulic equipment that he can't repair on his own.

These parts, like car parts, are designed to last for a certain percentage of the actual life of the tractor. The farmer is thus victimized and forced to pay high repair cost in the local town.

When will human need surpercede profit greed?

Name withheld by request

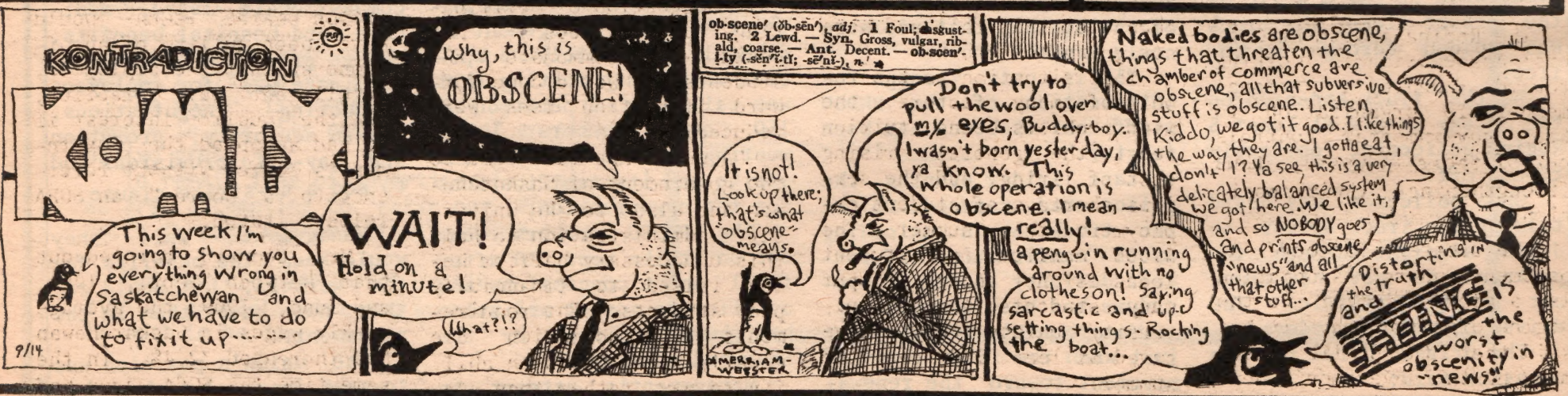
THE PRAIRIE FIRE

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RENTERS ORGANIZE

"Renters are being treated as second-class citizens!" stated W. J. McKeown, chairman of the Regina Renters' Council, in an interview with The PRAIRIE FIRE.

"Although they make up the majority of the community, renters are denied municipal voting rights. They are not considered responsible enough to decide where and for what the city should spend its money," Mr. McKeown said.

The renters of Regina must be united, the Council feels, in order to oppose a proposed renters' tax. They must work toward the revision of the Landlord and Tenant Act and petition for legislation allowing for the formation of a Rental Review Board, the Council suggests.

By considering a "renters' tax" the city is not taking account of the fact that renters already pay their landlord's property tax indirectly, through their rent.

Although City Council later denied proposing such a tax, the Renters' Council feels the threat still exists.

They also contend that under the present archaic Landlord and Tenant Act, the landlord has few obligations while the tenant is often overburdened with obligations. There is now no legislation holding landlords responsible for fluctuating rents or requiring them to provide adequate notice of further rent increases.

In addition, landlords have almost unlimited control over their tenants through a one-sided lease system.

The Rental Review Board which the Council wants would be an objective, third party board which would mediate between landlord and tenant.

Mr. McKeown feels these are not unrealistic demands, and that since landlords are organized in Apartment Owners' Associations, tenants should organize also.

The Regina Apartment Owners' Association is working toward founding a national membership organization to keep governmental controls out of their industry, thus strengthening their position.

The Greater Vancouver Apartment Owners' Association is a group similar to the Regina organization. It has said that "the public is demanding the government bend to a socialistic position. This could bring about rent control with government par-

ticipation ...in the housing program."

The Renters' Council ran into opposition from the owners during a meeting of the owners in Regina last week. At the meeting the owners rejected the idea of government control and the establishment of a Rental Review Board.

One of their members, Mr. Gibson, went so far as to move that the Renters' Council be investigated for possible "trouble makers". The motion never carried because it had no seconder.

Don Grier, vice-chairman of the Renters' Council, said the two groups had some things in common and that

one group could not get along without the other.

The Regina Renters' Council will meet again on Oct. 23 at 8 p.m. in the Museum of Natural History. All concerned renters are invited, and the organizers hope that the 300 people who came to their last meeting will return to discuss these issues further.

SGEA FEARS QUOTA

The recent action of the Provincial Government in withholding annual pay increments for Public Service employees pending the conclusion of contract negotiations may be a threat to influence the contract talks.

In a news bulletin sent to its members, the Saskatchewan Government Employees Association suggested this action could lead to the introduction of a quota system for its members.

Mr. Bill Leonard, Executive Secretary of the SGEA, said this action might be a

threat designed to influence the talks, but he could not be sure before the October cheques came out on Nov. 1.

The way the increment system is presently set up there is provision for five increases in pay, Mr. Leonard said.

The first increment is the most important and is granted for improvement in a new employee's work. The next two are for advances in the employee's competence and responsibilities. The fourth and fifth increases are used to hold good em-

ployees on the job.

The entire system is now based on the merit of the worker, rather than on a quota system, Mr. Leonard said.

In operation, a quota system means that if there are 100 employees in a department and a quota of 80 per cent, then only 80 employees can get pay increments, even if all of them deserve increments on the basis of merit.

If a quota system is introduced, it will be no more than "a budgetary gimmick and totally unfair," according to the SGEA News. The paper says that every employee is entitled to be assessed on the basis of his merits rather than on the basis of a quota system.

Because contract negotiations have failed to produce a settlement, the Provincial Executive of the SGEA has asked that the dispute be referred to a conciliation board.

The SGEA has said pay and all of their other major proposals are in dispute. "The Government's position on pay was the chief stumbling block. It lacked any rationale for dealing intelligently and fairly with complex pay problems involved in an agreement with 512 classes embracing professional, technical, administrative, clerical, institutional, trades and other positions.

"Regardless of the outcome of the case before a conciliation board, SGEA would have been guilty of an offense against the employees, intelligent pay practice, and the public interest if it had accepted the Government's offer without reference to a board," an SGEA release stated.

Mr. Leonard pointed out that between Sept., 1964, and June, 1969, the average weekly wages in Saskatchewan had increased 32.4%. In the same time the SGEA wages had increased only 22.8%. As a result, SGEA is asking for an increase of 12.6%.

TUITION FEES RAISED AGAIN

For the fifth time in the last five years, tuition fees at Regina Campus have been raised, causing what has been termed by some students a crisis in student entrance to the university.

The fees at the University of Saskatchewan were once the lowest in Canada. They now rank as the highest in Western Canada.

The latest increase was \$25 this fall, and speculation on the campus is that there will be a further increase before Christmas.

A large percentage of eligible students have not returned this fall because of a shortage of funds. A survey of students in Saskatoon this summer indicated that about 1400 -- 16.5% of the student body -- would not be able to meet the costs of education this fall and were not going to return.

This situation is the result of many factors, the main problems being tuition fees, the general rising cost of living, and the serious shortage of student employment this summer. The \$1000 maximum on student loans is not enough to put many students through university unless they have saved at least \$600 over the summer.

Tuition fees have obviously risen at a rate completely unconnected with the

rising costs of education or general inflation. The fees have doubled in the last seven years, with four increases in the last five years. At present the fees stand at \$425 per year.

As an answer to the lack of grain sales, a limited number of students were allowed to pay some of their tuition with grain. This, however, benefitted only approximately 375 of the applicants, leaving more than three-quarters of the applicants with a definite shortage of funds.

At present there appears to be no ceiling on tuition fees. More increases are generally felt to be in line for the future. In 1967 Premier Thatcher said he was "unequivocally opposed to any suggestion of eliminating tuition fees How could we accommodate the students who would come forward if tuition fees were reduced?"

"A challenge must come to the government of Saskatchewan and also to the University administration to halt this unnecessary barrier being raised to financially poor students. The requirements for admission are clearly being based on ability to pay rather than academic scholarship," commented SRC Councillor Don Mitchell.

MONOPOLY CONTROL W

The federal government has very little control over the price a Saskatchewan farmer gets for his wheat, research done by The PRAIRIE FIRE has revealed.

The Canadian Wheat Board has little or no control over the price that is paid for Canadian wheat sold on international markets.

The single most important factor in the whole picture of world wheat sales is the fact that the sale of Canadian wheat is largely dependent on fluctuations in the wheat marketing policy of the United States.

Because Canada's hard wheat demands a higher price on world markets than softer wheat grades grown elsewhere, it has cut back on sales. But Canada's biggest headaches have been in finding ways to deal with American export subsidies (both at the farm and transportation levels) and with legislation on the distribution of surplus wheat.

Canada experiences instability in her wheat sales precisely to the extent that American farm policy subsidizes the sale of U.S. wheat, as G.E. Britnell, a Canadian academic, has stated in an article entitled "Implications of U.S. Policy for the Canadian Wheat Economy."

PRAIRIE FIRE NEWS ANALYSIS

by
RAY DAVIE

U.S. policy makers keep the price of wheat at a low level on the international market and thus it is hard for Canada to compete with these low prices. Generous subsidies to American farmers make up the difference between the actual costs of production and the price which the wheat gets on the international market, according to Britnell.

Exporters are also subsidized to make up the difference between the domestic

price of wheat and the minimum price set by the International Wheat Agreement.

This policy reduces the wheat sales of Canada because we do not have a subsidy program. In response to criticism of this policy, American Government farm experts say this low price is due to low transportation costs of wheat shipping--low costs which they have created by subsidizing exporters.)

The result of this American policy is that subsidized exports compete with unsubsidized Canadian wheat on the world market. The Americans are in a position to undersell Canadian wheat and increase taxes to bear the cost of their subsidy programs.

In other words, American price-fixing at home undermines world markets. This program netted a 460 per cent increase in U.S. wheat exports from the pre-war le-

vel to 1956, while Canada netted only a 39 per cent increase, according to the Britnell article.

As well as subsidy programs, American wheat sales get around the IWA by utilizing two bills allowing them to either give away grain or sell it very cheaply as part of their aid program. The two bills are the Mutual Securities Act of 1953 and the Agricultural Trade Development and Assistance Act.

Canada has found a par-

tial solution to this situation by trading with countries the U.S. refuses to trade with. The most well known ones are Russia and China. In these areas the Americans cannot manipulate prices.

However, Canada still faces two major problems as far as international wheat sales are concerned:

1) She must find markets for more goods from China and Russia (and also the underdeveloped world) so these countries do not have to pay cash for wheat;

2) She must find a way to counteract the hold of the importer-exporter firms on international wheat sales.

Wheat sales are of two types -- inter-government sales and sales on the open market. Most of Canada's selling problems arise because of open market sales.

The Wheat Board, contrary to popular opinion, is not a selling and transporting agency.

All the Wheat Board agents do on their trips is find potential buyers and then let the private firms make the sale.

Open market sales involve dealing more with private interests than with governments.

These sales go to bakers or millers, cereal companies, feed grain sellers, or other merchants.

The problem is the Wheat Board can arrange for these interests to buy the wheat, but such deals are usually made through one of the four major grain handling firms that also set prices and transportation costs.

The following is an tional private firms tha market wheat sales in the

CARGILL INCORPORATED -

This firm is based in 4800 people in its subsidi ican owned and has branch nipeg. Grain and grain animal oils, hybrid corn portation are its main act

BUNGE and BORNE INCORPORAT

Based in Argentina, its portation of grain, oilsee flour, millseed, textiles, feeders, Quebracho extract

Bunge imports chemical equipment and materials, t ials, steel, and non-ferro

The chain also consists Merchants, Bunge Far East Pulp and Paper Co., and c lia and India.

CONTINENTAL GRAIN COMPANY

American owned with h branch offices in Winnipe importer and exporter of g pepper, ground nuts and o oils, rubber, tin, etc.

DREYFUS -

Several companies mak (Les Fils), an old bankin and now based in Switzerla Co., Ltd., grain merchants the companies in this grou

The activities of this and exporting of manufact oil drilling equipment. Switzerland, the U.S. and

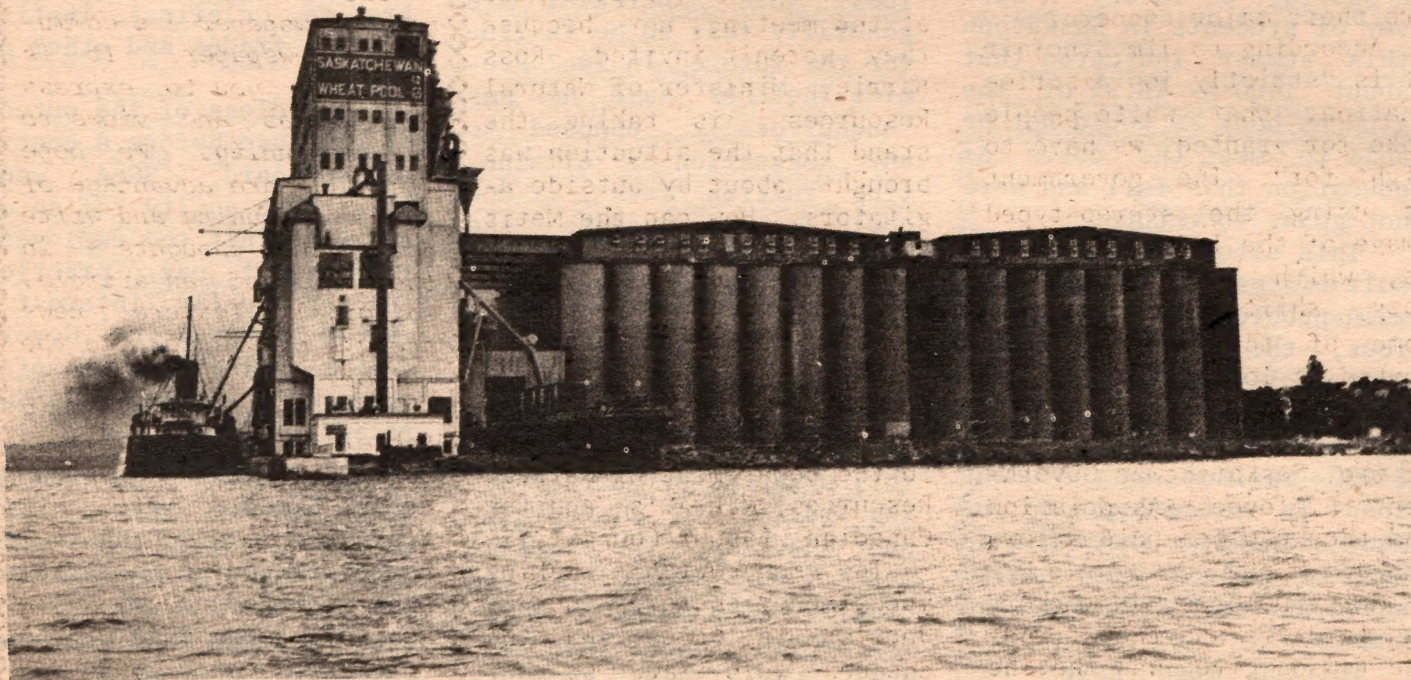
(The material for this Poor's Industrial Index Register.)

The four handling firms are Cargill, Inc., the Dreyfus chain, Continental Grain Co., and the Bunge chain. Between them they have an almost total monopoly on "free world" grain sales.

So when the Wheat Board arranges a private sale it is virtually forced to turn it over to one of these monopoly firms.

The firm then transports the wheat to the buyer and resells it to him at a price which includes shipping expenses and profit to the firms.

If the Wheat Board can find its own markets---and there are very few that the four firms do not control--it must still sell through these four firms.



BUSINESSES HEAT PRICES

outline of the four interna-
virtually control all open
Western World.

Minneapolis and employs over
ries. The company is Amer-
offices in Montreal and Win-
sharehousing, vegetable and
eed, mixed seed, and trans-
ivities.

D -
principal activity is ex-
s, cotton, general produce,
vegetable oils, oilcakes,
hides, tallow, etc.
s, fertilizers, industrial
nplate, construction mater-
s metals.

of Bunge Grain Brokers and
agencies in Manilla, Bunge
companies in Belgium, Austra-

ad office in New York and
and Vancouver. It is an
rain and also imports rice,
l bearing seeds, vegetable

up this group: Dreyfus
family established in 1813
d, and Dreyfus (Louis) and
based in London, are among

company include importing
dred goods, bubble gum, and
It has offices in London,
Canada.

article was gathered from
and Marconi's International

Under a system where the
U.S. is the only country ec-
onomically powerful enough
to subsidize these four com-
panies --two owned by Ameri-
cans -- Canada has difficul-
ty in making private and
Western wheat sales.

There are many proponents
of change who feel that the
best solution to Canada's
wheat sale problems is to
expand trade with Communist
and underdeveloped coun-
tries.

They claim this would
help counteract Canada's
vulnerability to fluctua-
tions and subsidy programs
within the Western bloc.

These experts warn, how-
ever, that Canada must be-
come more receptive to goods
from China, Russia, the Eas-

tern European bloc, Cuba,
Latin America, and Africa.

The Canadian government
could then pay cash for farm
produce, trade it equally
for these goods and resell
them in government-owned re-
tail outlets, thus getting
repaid for its original
cash outlay.

These measures, many ex-
perts feel, would not only
be a concrete step toward
the independent development
of these countries as well
as of Canada, but it would
also promote a good deal
more international goodwill
than exists at present.

More close to home, these
solutions would alleviate
current strains on Saskat-
chewan farmers and guarantee
cash for their products.



METIS FIRED IN NORTH

by Harry Daniels

Must there be another re-
bellion before the govern-
ment and people of Canada
will open their eyes and see
that the Metis are people?
"We are not commodities that
can be shifted and used as
administrations see fit",
said Jim Sinclair, Vice Pre-
sident of the Metis Society
of Saskatchewan.

Another situation has ri-
sen in the north that makes
one wonder at the mentality
of our present government
and its administrators.

The Metis who work in the
Battleford Provincial Park
under Superintendent Don
Horncastle, have become very
disgruntled. Reduction in
wages, lay-offs and firings
are their major concern.

According to Jim Sinclair
it is "strictly job discrim-
ination. What white people
take for granted, we have to
fight for". The government
is using the stereo-typed
image of the Indian and Met-
is, which is that of the
lazy, shiftless, drunkard.
Some of the men who have
worked as long as ten years
are now classed as casual
labour. This keeps them out
of the Saskatchewan Govern-
ment Employees Association
and they can be paid a low-
er wage.

Harry Delorme, a worker,
was laid-off and then fired.
The reason given was that he
was a drunkard but it is a

know fact that Mr. Delorme
does not drink to excess.

The Metis Society is go-
ing to back the men up and
see this situation out to
the end. The government is
going to keep helping Horn-
castle but how can they jus-
tify their position, when
there are 74 men complaining
about how he is running the
park?

Jim Sinclair said, "The
men concerned are very bit-
ter and willing to see this
situation out to the end and
demonstrate if necessary."

A meeting was held in Co-
chin on Thursday evening, at
which Howard Adams, Presid-
ent of the Metis Society and
Jim Sinclair heard the grie-
vances of the men. The gov-
ernment was not represented
at the meeting, not because
they weren't invited. Ross
Barrie, Minister of Natural
Resources, is taking the
stand that the situation was
brought about by outside ag-
itators. How can the Metis
Society be called outside ag-
itators, when the original
grievances came to the Soc-
iety from the men them-
selves?

As a result of the meet-
ing petitions are being sent
to the Department of Natural
Resources, M.L.A.'s and the
Canadian Labour Council.

The men weren't making
much money before the re-
duction in wages and the
cheques were late so they
had to resort to snaring ra-

bbits. As if that weren't
bad enough, they had to ob-
tain permits to do so.

The excuse given for this
reduction in wages was that
there wasn't enough money.
It would be interesting to
find out if any of the de-
partment heads had a reduc-
tion in wages.

This is just another sit-
uation where the Government
is trying to again exploit
the Native people. It seems
that in this society, if
you're white, you're right;
if you're red, you're dead.

write

The PRAIRIE FIRE is
your newspaper - a commu-
nity newspaper. It is
here for you to express
your ideas and views to
the community. We hope
you will take advantage of
this opportunity and write
down your thoughts -- in
the form of an article,
editorial, feature, news
story, or letter to the
editor.
The article by Harry
Daniels which appears on
this page is one of our
first examples of this
kind of communication from
the people of Regina. Mr.
Daniels lives and works in
Regina, where he maintains
intimate contact with the
Metis community.

CO-OP PROBLEMS UNFOLD

reduced benefits and across-the-board wage increases to compensate for the rising cost of living.

After two and a half months of negotiations, management had agreed to raise the wages of the Food Mart employees to those of Regina Safeway and Dominion Store employees. But management still refused to raise the wages of department store employees, or to reconsider their previous position on benefits.

The legal action by the Committee of Concerned Co-operators came after the co-op Board of Directors announced on Oct. 10 its refusal to call the meeting asked for in the petition.

A spokesman for the committee said that all legal procedures as set out in the Co-Operatives Societies Act to call a membership meeting had been followed.

Management, in a letter to the committee, said the meeting could not be held because it would be harmful to negotiations, would not serve any purpose, that the accounting asked for needed time for preparation and that the three thousand dollars that the meeting would cost was not justifiable.

The petition submitted about two weeks ago, called for a meeting at which the Board would report on negotiations and present a statement of operating costs during the strike. The petition also asked for discussion of the relationship between Sherwood Co-op and Federated Co-operatives Limited, and the implications of this relationship for the democratic operation of the association.

The Sherwood management and its supporters claim that all during the negotiations they have adopted "normal industry practices" in order to remain financially solvent.

From a strictly practical point of view, however, this policy has failed, at least over the past five years.

In 1965, Sherwood's sales were \$675,000. In 1968 sales were \$679,000, an increase of only \$4000 over four years.

This rise cannot be accounted for by the rise in prices during that period. It represents fewer goods being sold in 1968 than in 1965. Thus an operating loss in 1968 had to be offset by other income, chiefly dividends from Federated Co-op.

At the same time, Sherwood owes more than \$250,000

to Federated and has gotten another \$250,000 from Federated by mortgaging its property.

Sherwood has a long-term debt outstanding to the Saskatchewan Co-op Credit Society of more than \$1,000,000 and has had to create another \$13,000 of capital through another mortgage.

It appears that Sherwood Co-op has come to the brink of financial bankruptcy.

With this picture in mind

managers hired by Sherwood at the insistence of Federated for this imbalance.

In any case, Sherwood is too heavily indebted to Federated to be able to easily refuse Federated's suggestions.

It seems that Sherwood's present operating policy contains the seeds of its own destruction, many members feel. A complete reorganization is necessary, with a view to substantially

bers. They joined Sherwood when it was truly cooperative, when it still offered essential goods, low prices and substantial patronage dividends. They have remained loyal by buying as much as they can in Sherwood's stores.

But with the passage of time, these older members will become even older and fewer, and Sherwood's sales will therefore continue to decline. Hope must—and does—lie in the 24,000 members who are still light spenders and could be induced to buy more of their necessities at Sherwood. These members represent Sherwood's greatest potential.

At present, there is no good reason for young city families to buy at the Co-op, many members and striking employees feel. The selection of goods in the department store is limited, and their quality is often inferior to that at Simpson's, the Bay, or Regina's several discount stores.

Prices in the Food-Mart are often higher on comparable goods than prices at Safeway or Dominion. People join Sherwood because they expect service in the tradition of Saskatchewan's consumer cooperatives, but they are often disappointed and take their business elsewhere.

Sherwood Co-op cannot hope to compete with privately-owned retail stores on terms set by those stores. It cannot hope to attract customers with luxury items, since most of its members cannot afford and don't want these goods.

But the people of Regina would respond to food, clothing and other necessities being offered at reduced prices. The potential is there, if Co-op policy lives up to the members' and employees' expectations of a genuine consumer cooperative.



The Sherwood Co-op Department Store has been fairly empty since the strike there began five weeks ago. Strikers claim, however, that management policies have for years been much more effective than picket lines at keeping customers out of the store.

many members are now wondering whether "normal industry practices" are appropriate to a cooperatively owned enterprise.

Consumer cooperatives were organized in the 1940s as an alternative to the chain stores, to meet the needs of farmers and working people who were their founders. For many years, they provided necessary goods at lower prices than the chain stores.

Now, however, many members feel co-ops offer their customers superior goods at higher prices.

Striking employees attribute Sherwood's failure as a truly cooperative association to its domination by Federated. They claim the strikebreakers recently working in the department store and Food-Mart were employees of Federated who usually hold managerial positions.

Immediately prior to the strike, Sherwood was employing one "manager" for every three full-time employees—hardly a "normal industry practice," since in most privately-owned retail stores the ratio is one manager for every seven employees. Strikers blame general

increasing sales within the next few years.

A study conducted by the Board of Directors in 1967 offers a degree of hope—the large number of Co-op members who now spend only small amounts in the Co-op each year.

The study showed that just under half of Sherwood sales are made to the 12% of members who spend \$500 or more every year in the store. The 23,751 members who spend less than \$500 per year contribute as large a volume of sales as the big-spenders.

The heavy spenders are mostly Sherwood's older mem-

Events Calendar

The PRAIRIE FIRE will soon be printing a weekly calendar of community events, such as:

- Union meetings
- Neighborhood social clubs
- Cultural events
- Political meetings and discussions
- Lectures, speeches, talks
- Youth events

We hope this calendar will help keep people informed about what's going on in Regina. Please send us notices of any community events in which you are involved or in which you are interested.

Notices should be in The PRAIRIE FIRE's office at 2640 Angus Blvd., by the Tuesday preceding the week of publication of each issue.



(The EXILES column which appears in The PRAIRIE FIRE is written by former U. S. servicemen now living in Regina. They are members of the Regina Committee of American Deserters.)

Why are there deserters in Regina?

Why would an American serviceman want to leave his native country, especially under circumstances despised by most of his fellow countrymen?

Perhaps if we speak a bit concerning the living conditions within the U.S. military forces our position will be clearer.

Only within the past few months have the established news media in the U. S. revealed the cruel, inhuman conditions of military stockades and brigs. The first expose last spring about the Presidio mutiny and the conditions which triggered it shocked the American people.

Presidio, located near San Francisco, was and still is not different from any other confinement units. All of them are extremely overcrowded and brutal hell-holes.

Twenty-seven GI prisoners were charged with mutiny because they sat on the ground and sang peace songs in protest over the slaying of a fellow prisoner. The slain GI was shot in the back of his head while attempting to escape.

By military law, a guard must make three warning shouts, two warning shots, and then shoot to maim—not to kill.

There were no warning shouts or shots. The slayer was not charged, and, as general procedure in such cases, he was allowed choice of another duty station.

In last week's LIFE magazine, an article covers the conditions of the Camp Pendleton Marine Corps brig:

"The hog-tied brig rats of Camp Pendleton...isolated brig rats who 'act up,' are sometimes chained to the ceiling.... A noisy prisoner may have his face taped, wrists and ankles

lashed together....In many cases guards have ganged up on bound prisoners, kicking and beating them."

Many of us in Canada have been in situations like Presidio and Camp Pendleton. These are not isolated cases -- this dehumanizing treatment is general to the U. S. military itself.

As young Americans we were raised and educated to believe torture, brainwashing, half-truths and all the other underhanded methods are attributable to "Commies." But when we got into the service... what a shock!

LIFE says the Pendleton brig is "a bomb ready to detonate."

But detonations have been going off all through the military and its stockades and brigs.

More than a few deserters saw a riot in the U.S. army stockade in Long Binh Jail (LBJ), Vietnam, in the summer of 1968. The place was burned to the ground by GI prisoners.

On June 5, this summer, the stockade at Ft. Dix, New Jersey, was the scene of a large riot, a result of severe oppression by Army officials.

These are only a few examples of the military structure--its mode of operation--the U.S. deserters left behind.

In many cases, the ex-servicemen organized or became part of resistance inside the armed forces before splitting for Canada. In other cases, the shattered American dream left feelings of profound confusion and depression.

Growing numbers of disillusioned young soldiers are heading for a new frontier -- Canada.

Whatever the diverse situations, we are here in Canada... in Regina. More and more, people all over the world are beginning to understand why.

NEWS BACKGROUND

GOVT. EXTENDS 'DETERRENT' FEE

The Saskatchewan government started a program of "utilization" fees for people suffering from diseases and disabilities requiring physiotherapy Oct. 1.

The fee is \$1.50 per visit to a physiotherapist on an outpatient basis. But a standard course of treatments will cost much more. Patients needing physiotherapy often are suffering from chronic conditions or long term disabilities that require repeated treatments. These additional "deterrent fees" represent a further deterioration of the original universal medicare program.

In the face of rising medical and hospital care costs, the provincial government has devised several schemes to relieve itself of this financial burden and responsibility.

It has introduced a direct personal tax on the sick in the form of the so-called "utilization" fees.

It has attempted to pass the burden on to municipalities for picking up the \$95,000 and \$250,000 deficits for the operating costs at Saskatoon City Hospital and Regina General.

It has delayed and obstructed plans for improvements at the General Hospital.

It is attempting to shift much of the financial burden onto hospital workers in the form of a wage freeze. Ac-

cording to Saskatoon's Mayor Sid Buckwold, the broken contract with the Saskatoon City Hospital workers "means an end of collective bargaining." Another eighty nurses were told to look for jobs elsewhere, as Saskatchewan could no longer afford the care they had been providing.

There are other alternatives for dealing with rising hospital and medical care expenses. The cost of a comprehensive and effective health program covering the costs of reasonably modern hospital and nursing home facilities, drugs, dental care, a public health program with emphasis on preventative medicine, an adequate research program, and an adequate number of justly paid health workers can only be fairly met out of general government revenues and taxation according to income.

Rising administrative costs of medicare can be considerably reduced by the elimination of the present fees for service system of payments to doctors. Doctors could be paid annual salaries just as public health doctors are now paid.

By cooperatively organizing clinics of general practitioners, specialists, nurses, and social workers, the costs of wasteful duplications and underemployment could be eliminated.

LEGAL RIGHTS

Without wanting to encourage deliberate defiance of police authority, the Prairie Fire feels citizens should know what their basic legal rights are. Legal authorities have been consulted to ensure the accuracy of the points below.

Unless you have been lawfully arrested, you are not obliged to tell a police officer your name, age or address. Nor is it necessary to say whether you have a job or a place to stay.

You do not have to show an officer the contents of your wallet or produce identification of any kind.

You are under no obligation to stand and talk to a police officer. If you do not wish to talk with him you may walk away. He cannot force you to remain with him unless he makes a

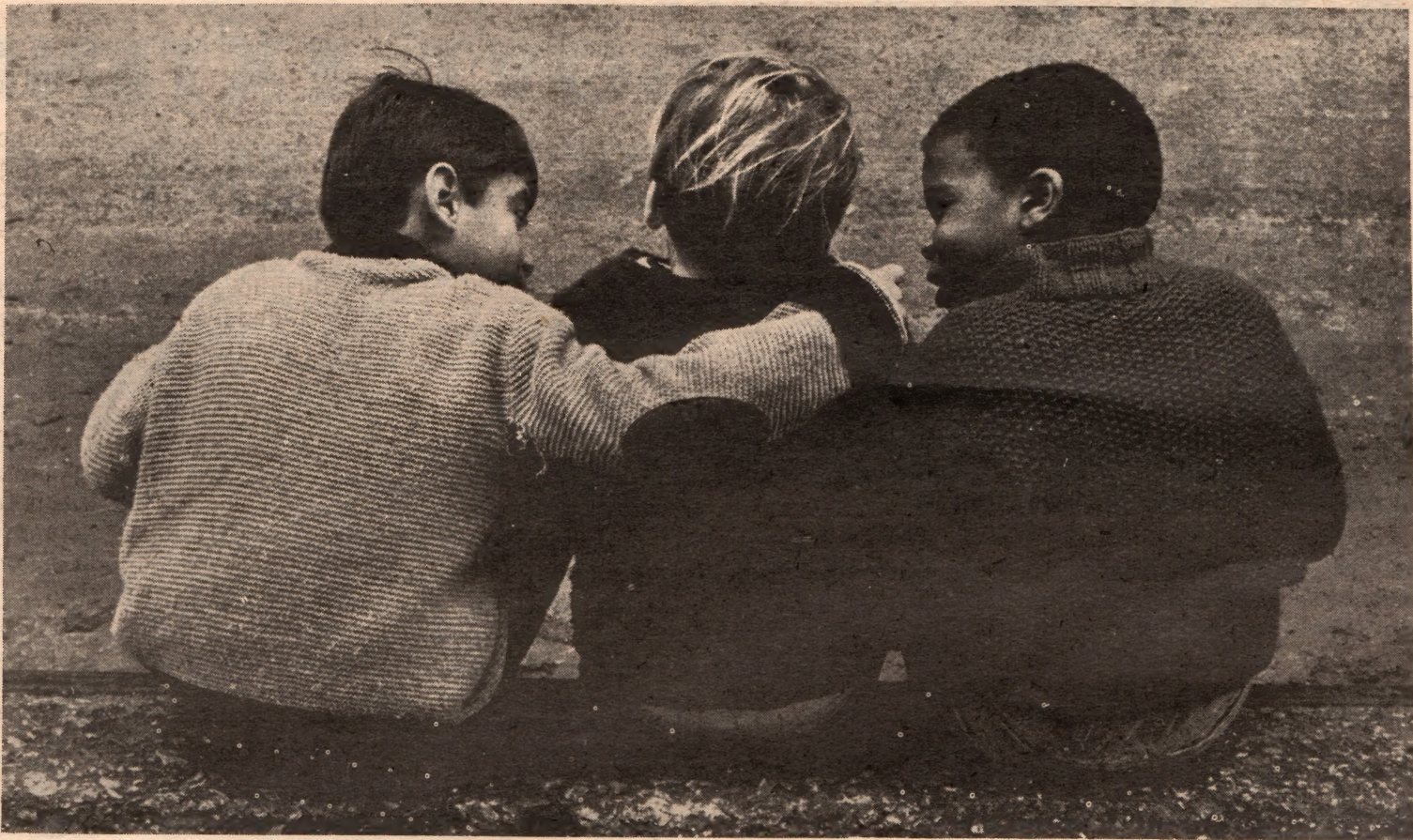
"lawful arrest".

Generally, you are under no obligation to answer any question a police officer might put to you -- with two exceptions:

(a) If you are the driver -- not a passenger -- of an automobile you must produce a Drivers License and an Automobile Insurance Card.

(b) If an officer asks you what you are doing, or asks you to justify your presence in the place where you are found, you must answer him. Just tell him honestly what you are doing.

Please keep in mind that if you speak to a police officer quietly and respectfully -- as someone doing a difficult and responsible job -- you are much more likely to be treated with respect in turn. Remember, Cops are people who have hassles too.



Fallout from nuclear testing blights human reproduction. "The scientific evidence indicates that already at least one of three children who died before their first birthdays in America in the 1960s may have died as a result of nuclear testing" (Ernest J. Sternglass, The Death of All Children, Esquire, Sept., 1969).

The deaths occur mainly in states downwind from test sites, and also in *North Dakota*. In North Dakota were found "the highest concentrations of radioactivity anywhere in the U.S. for which data are available prior to 1960.

"The causes of this 'hot spot' are not yet understood fully, but they are quite possibly connected with

known accidental discharges of radioactivity from the Hanford, Washington plant ...directly to the West."

These findings make the whole ABM system pointless. The newly-found effects of fallout on reproduction mean that in any war in which the ABMs were used, no matter who "won" or "lost," the fallout would kill most of the world's children in the

womb or shortly after birth.

The fallout from even the smallest kind of ABM war would be at least 100 times the fallout from all nuclear tests to date.

Regina is close to the highest concentration of radioactivity anywhere in the U.S. What "compensation" does Mr. Trudeau plan to demand at his next cocktail party in the White House?

SUPPORT

YOUR COMMUNITY NEWSWEEKLY

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We remain determined to continue publishing weekly.

Subscriptions cost \$8/year or \$3/four months. We are also offering a \$150 lifetime subscriptions.

Send cash, cheque or money order to 2640 Angus Boulevard. Make them payable to the Regina Community Media Project.

This paper belongs to the people of Regina; anyone can help as a correspondent, researcher, subscriber, or

The PRAIRIE FIRE continues to publish as Regina's alternative newspaper.

The paper is founded on the belief that people in the city need and want an alternative press.

To remain free of advertisers' pressure, we are attempting to raise our operating costs through subscriptions and donations.

The PRAIRIE FIRE will continue to publish if people assist and support it; there is much to be done.

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